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Foreword

Volume 21, Number 1 of the *Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal* contains both peer-refereed Research papers and Field Notes. This issue includes a special collection of papers focused on improving water quality in the Great Barrier Reef, alongside contributions addressing extension and innovation systems more broadly.

The Research section publishes outcomes of research into extension, change management, development and innovation systems relevant to agriculture and natural resource management. Research papers are expected to follow rigorous and recognised disciplinary research methodologies and are subject to a double-blind peer-review process involving two independent reviewers.

Field Notes are informal and accessible articles that document experiences, successes, challenges and lessons from extension practice. They provide an opportunity for rural advisors, extension practitioners and others working in the field to share stories and case studies that are relevant to fellow practitioners and demonstrate the application of extension concepts and theory in practice. Field Notes are assessed and edited to ensure their coherence, relevance and suitability for the journal.

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Severine van Bommel

Chief Editor

The character of the Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal

The *Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal* is published by the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (APEN) with free online access to APEN members and others. A printed version is available to interested individuals and organisations by paid subscription.

The *Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal* is an innovative extension publication of APEN. The journal covers extension aspects of rural systems. It is for professional extension practitioners, researchers, educators, farmers, farmer groups, corporate agribusiness managers, professional farm business consultants, extension and development officers, and postgraduate students who want to help extend the available knowledge about efficient and effective agricultural extension and development activities. Extension has many definitions but to provide guidance we will adopt that found on the Australasia Pacific Extension Network website (<http://www.apen.org.au>). There are four types of papers published: Research, Literature reviews, Practice, and APEN conference keynote papers.

Research papers

Research papers contain research into agricultural and natural resource change management, extension, development and innovation systems issues that follow rigorous and recognised disciplinary research methodologies. Papers will be reviewed by the Editor and double-blind reviewed by two Editorial Board members or selected reviewers. Papers for this section target professional extension practitioners, researchers and educators. They should not exceed 7500 words.

Literature reviews

Literature reviews should be academic reviews in the fields of agricultural and natural resource change management, extension, development and innovation systems issues. The paper should follow a well-defined structure and will be reviewed by the Editor and double blind-reviewed by two Editorial Board members or selected reviewers. Maximum length is 5000 words.

Field notes

Field notes provide a forum for practitioners and academics to share their experiences and practical innovations with others in the fields of agricultural extension, farm management and natural resource management. They are informal, accessible articles that document successes, failures and lessons from extension professionals' experiences. Field notes are assessed and edited to ensure coherency and suitability by the Editor or an extension professional. Maximum length is 4000 words.

APEN conference keynote papers

Presenters of Keynote conference papers at APEN conferences will be given an opportunity to publish a paper based on their conference presentation. The focus is also on informal, accessible articles rather than academic articles. The Editors will review the paper. Papers should not exceed 5000 words.

Who can access the Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal?

The *REIS Journal* is published online free of charge for APEN members and a wider audience.

Who can publish in Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal?

The *REIS Journal* accepts articles submitted by rural advisory and extension researchers and practitioners worldwide. However, we encourage those of you resident in Australia, New Zealand or Pacific countries to become APEN members by contacting the APEN Secretariat at info@apen.org.au. To submit a paper for publication please send an electronic copy of your paper (edited as per Instructions to Authors, which is available on the *REIS* web site) to the Editor at reiseditor@apen.org.au. There is no charge for submission or publication.

The Editor will decide whether a paper meets the criteria for acceptance and then send it out for review under the relevant guidelines. Those articles accepted after the review process will be published.

Authorship, copyright and submission declaration

When submitting a manuscript corresponding author will be asked to submit an *Authorship, copyright and submission declaration*, which is available from the journal web site. It affirms that:

- The author(s) have been involved in preparation of the manuscript, agree with the order of authors on the manuscript and it does not exclude individuals who have had a major role in the design, conduct or write-up of the material contained in the paper.
- Individuals who have had a significant but not major role in the writing of the paper, the project or the research are acknowledged in the Acknowledgements section.
- The manuscript contains original work of the author(s) listed and where you have included the work of others this has been fully and appropriately acknowledged.
- The work has not been published previously in a peer-reviewed journal (except as part of an academic thesis, report to funding body or working paper).
- The manuscript is not under consideration for publication elsewhere or won't be while it is being considered by REIS and if it is accepted for publication by REIS.
- The authors(s) are willing to provide clarifications, corrections and retractions of mistakes to published papers.
- The research received ethics approval or followed ethical processes as required by your employer, institution, funder or country laws, with details of the ethics approval available if required. All data will be kept private and confidential.
- All participant involvement in the research has been voluntary and based on sufficient information and adequate understanding of both the proposed research and the implications of participation in it. Participants were provided with an opportunity to consent and to withdraw at any time.
- All clearances have been obtained from relevant authorities, including funder, for publication.
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- Where financial support for the research was provided, indicate who provided this support and briefly describe their role, if any, in the conduct of the research. If no role, state this. They can be acknowledged in the Acknowledgments section.

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Ethics

All research articles that involve collecting data from or about people should have ethics approval if required by their employer, institution, funder or country laws. Research should be conducted according to the principles outlined in the *National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007* (Updated May 2015) (www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/e72) or equivalent for the country where the research was conducted.

Refereeing process

When a *Research* or *Literature review* paper is submitted, the Editor will organise the double-blind review process to involve two experts in the field of agricultural extension. In the event of strong disagreement between two referees a third referee may be appointed.